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said emission face is provided with a plurality of light scattering elements distributed according to a predetermined pattern.

said emission face having a rough area formed on and around said light scattering elements such that the light scattering elements and an area surrounding the light scattering elements are roughened, and

said rough area having a roughness degree which is less than that of said light scattering elements.

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 4 and 7 have been amended. Claims 1-9 are pending and under consideration.

The Examiner cites U.S. Patent No. 4,519,686 to Seki et al. as disclosing an emission face provided with light scattering elements and a rough area. It is not exactly clear how the Examiner is reading the light scattering elements and rough area on Seki et al. However, the claims require that the rough area have a roughness which is less than that of the light scattering elements. Therefore, referring to Fig. 1 of Seki et al., perhaps the Examiner is citing the large protrusions, such as that labeled with reference numeral 20, for the light scattering elements. Perhaps the Examiner is citing the small protrusions, such as that to the left of reference numeral 21, for the rough area.

The claims have been amended to clarify the term "among." Specifically, the claims now recite that the emission face has a rough area formed on and around the light scattering elements such that the light scattering elements and an area surrounding the light scattering elements are roughened. Although the claims are certainly not restricted to what is disclosed in the specification and shown in the drawings, the Examiner is referred to Fig. 8 for antecedent basis purposes. Fig. 8 shows light scattering elements 14 and rough area M. The rough area M is provided on and around the light scattering elements 14. In Seki et al., there is no disclosure of a rough area provided on light scattering elements.

Seki et al. discloses a focusing screen of a camera. The Examiner cites Ishikawa et al. for the disclosure of a guide plate having an incidence end face, an emission face and a back face. The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to combine the two references "in order to obtain a brightness display." See the March 14, 2001 Office Action, page 4, last line. However, it is submitted that the modification would not have been obvious.

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Seki et al. discloses a plate-shaped optical member 10 having a face provided with small and large projections. However, every optical member 10 disclosed in Seki et al. is very different from those disclosed in Ishikawa et al.

As stated in Seki et al., at column 1, lines 5-8, the optical members 10 are focusing screens of a still or motion picture camera. As is well known, a focusing screen has a focal plane 2 (Fig. 1 and column 2, line 16) onto which an image of an object is focused. Light for focusing the image comes from a back side, as shown in Fig. 2B.

The purpose of the Seki et al. focusing screen is to diffuse light between a lens and an eye piece. Please see column 1, lines 16-20. It is important to realize that the light carrying an image comes from a back side of the focusing screen. Because light is emitted from a surface substantially parallel to the back side, light can enter and exit the focusing screen easily regardless of whether roughness is provided by the small and large projections 20.

In other words, the focusing screen does not require any particular configuration to cause light to escape from the focusing screen. The roughness provided by the small and large projections 20 merely contributes to light diverging different in directions after the light escapes from the focusing screen.

To the contrary, in Ishikawa et al., the light guide plate 11 has light supplied from the side thereof. Specifically, light enters through an incidence end face. See Fig. 10, reference letter T. The light is not focused, but is emitted from the emission face. Referring to Fig. 1 of Ishikawa et al., the incidence end face is certainly not parallel to the emission face. Therefore, it should be clear that one of the essential functions of the guide plate 11 is to change the direction of the light such that the light can enter the guide plate from a side and exit the guide plate from the front. The scattering elements and rough area promote emission of light. If the scattering elements and rough area are not formed, significantly less light is emitted from the emission face. As described above, Seki et al. is free from such a situation.

The purpose of the focusing screen 10 disclosed in Seki et al. is very different from the guide plate 11 disclosed in Ishikawa et al. Therefore, even though both are involved with moving light, it would not have been obvious to modify Ishikawa et al. based on the teachings of Seki et al.

Furthermore, as mentioned above, even if the modification would have been obvious, it would not produce the claimed invention.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the obviousness rejection should be withdrawn. There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 4, 2002

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please AMEND the following claims:

1. (TWICE AMENDED) A surface light source device of side light type comprising:

a guide plate having a minor face to provide an incidence end face and two major faces to provide an emission face and a back face; and

a primary light source providing primary light to the guide plate through the incidence end face, wherein

said emission face is provided with a plurality of light scattering elements distributed according to a predetermined pattern, [and]

said emission face having a rough area formed [among]on and around said light scattering elements such that the light scattering elements and an area surrounding the light scattering elements are roughened, and

said rough area having a roughness degree which is less than that of said light scattering elements.

4. (TWICE AMENDED) A liquid crystal display including a liquid crystal display panel and a surface light source device of side light type for backlighting the liquid crystal display panel, said surface light source device comprising:

a guide plate having a minor face to provide an incidence end face and two major faces to provide an emission face and a back face; and

a primary light source providing primary light to the guide plate through the incidence end face, wherein

said emission face is provided with a plurality of light scattering elements distributed according to a predetermined pattern, [and]

said emission face having a rough area formed [among]on and around said light scattering elements such that the light scattering elements and an area surrounding the light scattering elements are roughened, and

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said rough area having a roughness degree which is less than that of said light scattering elements.

7. (TWICE AMENDED) A guide plate of a surface light source device of side light type, comprising:

a minor face to provide an incidence end face for introducing light into the guide plate;
and

two major faces to provide an emission face for emitting light and a back face opposite said emission face, wherein

said emission face is provided with a plurality of light scattering elements distributed according to a predetermined pattern, [and]

said emission face having a rough area formed [among]on and around said light scattering elements such that the light scattering elements and an area surrounding the light scattering elements are roughened, and

said rough area having a roughness degree which is less than that of said light scattering elements.